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POLITICAL PARTIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES POLICIES: AN HISTORICAL EVALUATION, 1790-1950

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Since the turn of the century issues dealing with the conservation and development of the nation's natural resources have played a prominent part in political party philosophies and campaigns. Unlike many other national issues which are associated with a specific economic or social interest, natural resources problems cut across all groups and outlooks. There are few voters today who do not recognize their personal stake in the wise use and development of the nation's resources. Political parties and their spokesmen have found it both desirable and expedient in recent years to proclaim vigorously in platforms and speeches their dedication to the principles of conservation.

This essay is designed to give a brief picture of the position of political parties toward the evolution of natural resources policies. It seeks to shed light on the following questions: How have political parties approached natural resources measures during various periods of American history? What factors dominated in the formulation of party policies? How have parties differed in philosophy and actions? Can either of the major parties in recent history claim to be "the party of conservation?" What has been the role of third parties in advancing new objectives? Are there any new trends discernible with respect to parties and their relationships to natural resources?

This analysis grows out of a larger study which the author has been undertaking on the subject of the evolution of American national policy for natural resources. It is based primarily on an examination of three basic sources of data: (1) political party platforms and campaigns,¹ (2) Congressional debates and voting records on significant measures,² and (3) the accomplishments of the

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1. Unless otherwise stated, all references and quotations from political party platforms prior to 1904 are taken from McKee, *The National Conventions and Platforms of All Political Parties, 1789 to 1904 (1904)*. From 1904 to 1950 information on party platforms comes from Porter & Johnson, *National Party Platforms, 1840-1956 (1956)*.

2. Seventy-two legislative measures, including sixty-nine laws and three bills, were selected for analysis between the period of 1789-1950. The test of selection was the extent to which the laws marked new departures in natural resources policies and administration. Voting maps giving party breakdown by state and region were prepared for the following laws and bills:

Act of March 3, 1807 (Intrusion Act), 2 Stat. 445;
Home Department Bill Annals of Cong. 88 (1817);
Act of April 24, 1820 (Land Act), 3 Stat. 566;
Act of April 30, 1824 (Road and Canals Survey Act), 4 Stat. 22;
Distribution Bill, 9 Cong. Deb. 1920 (1833);

political administrations in power as reflected in presidential actions and administrative programs.³ Though voting analyses have been undertaken for five distinct intervals, namely, 1790-1830, 1831-1860, 1861-1890, 1891-1920, and 1921-1950, this presentation will focus upon policies of two broad periods, 1790 to 1860 and 1860 to 1950, with greater emphasis for purposes of reader interest on more recent history. In any case, this essay can hardly be viewed as any more than a brief summary of a subject so intimately related to American progress and development.

I. CONCEPTS OF NATURAL RESOURCES IN AMERICAN HISTORY

The position of political parties with respect to natural resources policies during various periods of American history cannot be judged in terms of the prevailing views of today. There have been many concepts of natural resources during our nation's development, and these must be interpreted in light of existing technology, the state of knowledge, and the economic and social environment of the era. Neither can practices of resource use and management of the early nineteenth century be evaluated from the standpoint of twentieth century stand-

Pre-emption Act of 1838, 5 Stat. 251 ;
 Pre-emption Act of 1841, 5 Stat. 453 ;
 Act of March 3, 1849 (Interior Department Act), 9 Stat. 395 ;
 Swamp Land Act of 1850, 9 Stat. 519 ;
 Act of September 20, 1850 (Illinois Central Railroad Grant), 9 Stat. 466 ;
 Graduation Act of 1854 (Public Lands), 10 Stat. 574 ;
 Homestead Act of 1862, 12 Stat. 392 ;
 Morrill Act (Agricultural Colleges) of 1862, 12 Stat. 503 ;
 Department of Agriculture Act of 1862, 12 Stat. 387 ;
 Act of March 1, 1872 (Yellowstone Park Act), 17 Stat. 32 ;
 Act of June 15, 1880 (Timber Trespass Act), 21 Stat. 237 ;
 General Revision Bill, 17 Cong. Rec. 7158 (1886) ;
 Railroad Land Grant Forfeiture Act, 26 Stat. 496 (1890) ;
 Forest Reserve Act of 1897, 30 Stat. 34 ;
 Lacey Act, 31 Stat. 187 (1900) ;
 Reclamation Act (Irrigation of Arid Lands) of 1902, 32 Stat. 388 ;
 Enlarged Homestead Act of 1909, 35 Stat. 639 ;
 Week's Law, 36 Stat. 961 (1911) ;
 Mineral Lands Leasing Act, 41 Stat. 437 (1920) ;
 Federal Power Act of 1920, 41 Stat. 1063 ;
 Boulder Canyon Project Act of 1928, 45 Stat. 1057 ;
 Muscles Shoals Resolution, 74 Cong. Rec. 5548-53 (1931) ;
 Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933, 48 Stat. 58 ;
 Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, 48 Stat. 1269 ;
 Guffey-Snyder Coal Act, 49 Stat. 991 (1935) ;
 Flood Control Act of 1936, 49 Stat. 1570 ;
 Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1938, 52 Stat. 31 ;
 Act of December 22, 1944 (Flood Control Act), 58 Stat. 887 ;
 Atomic Energy Act of 1946, 60 Stat. 755.

3. Several factors were evaluated in connection with political administrations, namely, presidential leadership in the natural resources field, legislation sponsored and enacted, executive orders issued, and administrative changes initiated.

ards of conservation. We need to remember that the word "conservation" as first applied to natural resources is of comparatively recent origin,⁴ and that what may appear important now was deemed to be inconsequential when a different ratio of resources to population prevailed.

Also, the significance of specific resources has varied from time to time in American history depending upon their use and rate of consumption. Salt, for example, was a crucial commodity in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, so much so that the new Federal government took early steps to see that salt deposits on public lands were placed under Federal management to protect the public from monopoly and speculation, a practice which continued in a declining fashion to 1877.⁵ Conditions changed, however, with new modes of production and transport, with the result that the conservation of salt as a resource has never been an issue of public policy in the twentieth century.

The protection of timber is another case where public policies have varied from one historical period to another. During the first part of the nineteenth century, the Federal government took a number of actions to preserve good mast timber for ships, principally live oak, and John Quincy Adams' administration even went so far as to establish a program of sustained yield operations on a forest reservation in Pensacola, Florida, in 1827.⁶ But with the development of steam-propelled vessels and later iron ships, policies for the conservation of timber resources fell by the wayside, not to be a matter for major public concern again until the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Many other illustrations could be given which show that any appraisal of policies for the use and development of resources must be placed in the context of the historical period and economy. Before the Civil War, the most widely used resources in the eastern portion of the United States—land, water, and timber—were abundant, and policies were fashioned specifically for each resource. Three considerations weighed heavily in political party positions with respect to the development of resources in the pre-1860 agrarian era: governmental revenues, land settlement, and internal improvements; on some occasions,

4. Gifford Pinchot takes partial credit for first applying the word "conservation" to the natural resources movement. He says, "Both Overton [Price] and I knew that large organized areas of Government forest lands in British India were named Conservancies, and the foresters in charge of them Conservators. After many other suggestions and long discussions, either Price or I (I'm not sure which and it doesn't matter) proposed that we apply a new meaning to a word already in the dictionary, and christen the new policy Conservation.

"During one of our rides I put that name up to T.R., and he approved it instantly. So the child was named, and that bridge was behind us." *Breaking New Ground* 326 (1947).

5. Act of May 10, 1800, 2 Stat. 73. The Surveyor-General was authorized to lease saline lands under stipulations deemed necessary to protect the public interest.

6. Act of March 3, 1827, 4 Stat. 242. See also Cameron, *The Development of Governmental Forest Control in the United States* 44 (1928).

tariffs and slavery also played an important role. To a lesser extent, during the first half of the nineteenth century evolving conceptions of democracy and emerging capitalism influenced party programs.

After the Civil War, however, with the growth of industrial society, concepts of natural resources began to shift. Not only did the consumption of resources dramatically increase, but the interrelationships of resources in a technological economy began to be perceived. The years between 1865 and 1891 may be characterized as a period of exploitation by a rising industry, during which time natural resources were subordinated to the political objectives of industrial development, homestead settlement, and the promotion of free enterprise.

Reaction to unbridled exploitation set in during the 1880's culminating in the General Revision Act of 1891 which greatly modified entry onto the public domain and provided the basis for the establishment of the first forest reservations.⁷ This marked the beginning of the era of "conservation." For the next three decades the emphasis was upon the *preservation* of resources of the public domain, including reservoir sites, forests, minerals, and scenic areas.

Beginning in the late 1920's with the enactment of the Boulder Canyon Project Act⁸ and carried forward with vigor in the 1930's, came changes culminating in a new era which may be characterized by the *regulation* and *development* of natural resources. On the one hand, public policies were evolved to encourage as well as restrict private entrepreneurs—from farmers to oil producers—from exploiting natural resources in ways inimical to the public interest. On the other hand, government entered into the public development of natural resources in a major way with significant programs of land use planning, river basin developments, nation-wide subsidies for resource improvements, and other broad undertakings. Suffice it to say here, that the era of regulation and development is still continuing, though some changes in the philosophy of resources management during the last thirty years have occurred.

Both of the major parties, and to a lesser extent the minor parties, have developed their positions on natural resources within the dominant political and social climate of the respective historical periods. Party performance in each period, therefore, must be judged from the standpoint of how well the party philosophies reflected economic and social needs; to what degree parties adequately represented national, regional, and group interests; and to what extent parties anticipated future problems of a nation whose natural resource needs were rapidly changing. Though admittedly much of this evaluation must be subjective, at least the major positions of political parties can be placed in perspective.

7. Act of March 3, 1891, 26 Stat. 1095.

8. 45 Stat. 1057 (1928). The Boulder Canyon (Hoover Dam) Project was the first major legislation authorizing a multiple-purpose project which included reclamation, electric power, navigation, flood control, and the development of the Colorado River Basin. It set the pattern for many of the large multiple-purpose projects which were to follow.

II. THE POSITION OF MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES BEFORE 1860

The positions of political parties toward natural resources before the Civil War are not difficult to trace. This is true even though party platforms did not appear until 1832, and many of the Congressional voting records on important legislation are unavailable. The explanation derives from the fact that political controversies in this field during the early nineteenth century usually centered around the proposed use or distribution of a specific resource. Furthermore, political parties were more clearly sectional parties, and voting on questions involving natural resources was closely related to sectional interests.

A. *The Prominence of Specific Resources*: The most important resource in America's agricultural economy before 1860 was land. Beginning with the Federalists, the public domain has played an important part in political strategy and was probably the source of more public and private legislation in Congress than any other subject before the Civil War. Not only was the land issue foremost in the establishment of the Anti-Federalist Party, and its successors the Democrat-Republican and the Democratic Parties, but it was the basis for more partisan combinations than any other pre-Civil War issue.⁹

From the standpoint of partisan prominence no other natural resource matched land in importance until near the close of the nineteenth century when the conservation of water resources and forests were featured in party debates. Waterways played an outstanding role in America's development and, for a short period during the canal-building decades of the 1820's and 1830's, vied with land for the political spotlight. Internal improvements was a major plank of the Whig program, the center of which was the river system. But with the advent of railroads and the construction of post roads, waterways degenerated as a national political issue. It was not treated again in a party platform until the campaign of 1884.¹⁰

Other resources occasionally figured in political debates and in the halls of Congress, but they never became major issues in political party strategy before the Civil War. The theft of timber from the public domain became of increasing public concern with westward expansion. The Senate noted the seriousness of the situation in a resolution in 1843.¹¹ However, it did not become an issue for

9. Arthur Holcombe extends this analysis beyond 1860. "The pressure of these various interests upon the national politicians was tremendous as long as desirable lands remained in the possession of the federal government, and from these various pressures the most powerful political forces could be generated by astute politicians. From the Land Ordinance of 1785 to the Pre-emption Act of 1841, the Homestead Act of 1862, the Reclamation Act of 1902, and the Conservation Movement of recent times, the problem of land settlement, and the problems which grew out of that problem, afforded more valuable material for effecting partisan combinations than any other subject to which the federal power extends." Holcombe, *Political Parties of Today* 33 (1924).

10. Both the Democratic and the Anti-Monopoly Party platforms of the year contained planks supporting improvements on navigable streams. McKee, *supra* note 1 at 206, 225.

11. *Cong. Globe*, 27th Cong., 3d Sess. 119 (1843).

political capital until the early 1850's and then only for a short period. In 1850 or 1851 (the records are not clear) timber agents were appointed under the newly established Department of the Interior, and the government undertook a strengthened enforcement campaign. With the change in Commissioners of the General Land Office in 1855 this policy was discontinued. Nevertheless, it marked the beginning of a controversy which, in the next half century, did offer much campaign fodder particularly for the party spokesmen of western states.

Few minerals were important to the early American economy.¹² Salt, lead, and copper headed the list. Beginning as early as the Ordinance of 1785, the Federal government pursued a policy which would protect these mineral deposits. For the first few decades of the nineteenth century, there were no major political implications to special enactments by Congress for mineral resources. But with the discovery of fruitful mineral sites, particularly lead, in Missouri, Wisconsin, and Illinois, dissatisfaction with the government's leasing system developed, and political pressures representing, for the most part, sectional interests of the west were generated. In 1839 the House of Representatives asked the President to draft a new plan for the disposal of public mineral lands, and in 1845 needed changes in the mineral laws were featured in President Polk's first annual message to Congress.¹³ The political pressures from the west increased with the discovery of new mineral fields in the late forties and fifties. These culminated in the replacement of the mineral leasing system by authorization to sell mineral lands with the enactment of the Mineral Lands Leasing Act of 1866.

Intermittently from that time until the turn of the century representatives of public domain states pressed for mineral laws more favorable to mining interests. It is noteworthy, however, that there are no recorded votes by Congress on what would be regarded as significant federal mineral legislation during the entire nineteenth century. In fact mineral resources are not featured in a political party platform until 1896 when third parties for the first time specifically began to attack large corporation holdings of mineral lands.¹⁴

12. The extent to which mineral exploitation has been related to technological and industrial development can be traced in the chronology of federal legislation. The first legislation for the disposal of coal lands was in 1864 (13 Stat. 343) and for iron in 1873 (17 Stat. 465). Phosphate and oil lands were first withdrawn from entry on the public domain by order of the Secretary of the Interior in 1908 (1 U.S. Dep't of Interior Ann. Rep. 215 (1909)), and 1909 (U.S. Geol. Survey Bull. No. 537, 38 (1913)), respectively, and by legislation in 1910 (36 Stat. 847). Potash lands were first withdrawn in 1913 (U.S. Geol. Survey Bull. No. 537, 40 (1913)). To move to the other end of the spectrum, the first legislation for uranium and thorium was in the Atomic Energy Act of 1946, 51 Stat. 755.

13. Cong. Globe, 29th Cong., 1st Sess. 4-11 (1845). President Filmore also asked for changes in the mineral laws in a message to Congress, December 2, 1848. See S. Doc. No. 445, 61st Cong., 2d Sess., 1910, in 59 Documents of a Public Nature II, 9.

14. The People's Party Platform of 1896 called for legislation from Congress which would exempt "mineral land from [railroad] grants after as well as before the patent." Agitation of this nature set the stage for the application of the reservation system to mineral lands. McKee, *supra* note 1 at 309.

Wild game and scenic resources were not the subject of Federal legislation until the last of the nineteenth century. The shortage of wild game was of public concern before 1860, but this was reflected in state legislation and not in federal law for the public domain until 1874.¹⁵ The Lacey Act of 1900 was the first general bird and game statute to be passed by the national government. The first federal statute for the preservation of a scenic resource was the creation of Yellowstone National Park in 1872, but it was not until the turn of the century with the establishment of park and monument reserves by executive orders that areas involving recreational resources became a political issue.

B. *The Positions of Political Parties*: As has been previously noted, political party policies toward natural resources before the Civil War revolved primarily around revenues, settlement, and internal improvement. When these major issues are related to interests of various sections of the nation, the broad outlines of party programs toward natural resources emerge.

The Federalist Party was the vehicle of the eastern seaboard, representing the philosophy of the rising commercial interests. It viewed with concern westward expansion and the power of a predominantly agricultural economy. To restrict agrarian settlement and to bolster the credit of the financially shaky government, the Federalists wanted to exploit the public domain as a lucrative source of revenues. Nowhere is this philosophy better illustrated than in Hamilton's report to Congress in 1790 which stressed revenues as the primary object in the disposal of public land.¹⁶

The need for revenues continued to dominate land policy until approximately 1820, and it was to a lesser extent important until the emergence of the homestead sentiment in the 1840's.¹⁷ However, as the population moved westward and as newly admitted border states strengthened the agrarian voice in national affairs, the issue of easier land settlement began to loom larger. The democrats of the west (Anti-Federalist, Democrat-Republican and Democratic Parties) fought the battle for cheap lands, graduated sales, and a more lenient credit system. The efforts during the Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe administrations to establish land policies more favorable to the settlers and frontier agricultural classes is illustrated by the fact that between 1800 and 1820 no less than a score

15. Congress in 1874 passed a bill to prevent careless slaughter of buffalo within the territories. The bill failed, however, to receive the signature of President Grant before adjournment.

16. Hamilton says, "That, in the formation of a plan for the disposition of the vacant lands of the United States, there appear to be two leading objects of consideration: one, the facility of advantageous sales, according to the probable course of purchases; the other the accommodation of individuals now inhabiting the Western country, or who may hereafter emigrate thither. The former, as an operation of finance, claims primary attention; the latter is important, as it relates to the satisfaction of the inhabitants of the Western country." American State Papers Class VIII, 1 Public Lands 8 (1832).

17. Roy Robbins concludes that it was not until the Pre-emption Act of 1841 "that Congress at last regarded the settlement of the public domain as more desirable than the revenue that might be obtained from it." Robbin, *Our Landed Heritage* 91 (1942).

of acts were passed to amend and liberalize the land laws. It is no exaggeration to say that this issue dominated the Democratic Party until the emergence of the slavery question when the south was forced to reconsider easy access to the public domain and break its alliance with the west on this subject. This struggle is symbolized by the courses of Senators Calhoun and Benton in the Democratic Party.¹⁸

During the same period a new concept affecting natural resources began to appear, namely, domestic development by internal improvements. As early as 1806 Jefferson in his annual message to Congress had advocated the spending of federal money on roads, rivers, and canals for the purposes of better communication.¹⁹ This concept motivated Gallatin's masterful report to the Senate on the subject in 1808.²⁰ It was not, however, until after the War of 1812 with the rise of the new nationalism that a policy of internal improvements began to vie with settlement as a policy of western development. While one would imagine that these policies were complementary and not competing, the fact that the program of the Whig Party was built around internal improvements made conflict with the Democratic Party inevitable. Internal improvements whether under federal or state auspices cost money, and most of the proposals supported by the Whigs directly or indirectly affected a cheap land policy.

It is possible to trace the contrasts of the Whig and Democratic Parties on internal improvements and land policies in the early political party platforms. The major plank of the platform of the National Republicans (the forerunners of the Whigs) in 1832 supported internal improvements. The Whig platform of 1844 supported distribution of proceeds from public lands to the states, and the platform of 1852 advocated river and harbor improvements by the federal government. The first national platform of the Democratic Party in 1840 concluded that it was unconstitutional for the federal government to undertake general improvements or to assume any debts for states contracted for that purpose. In addition a strong stand was taken against any abridgement of "the present liberty of becoming citizens and the owners of the soil." This theme was repeated with variation in the platforms of 1844, 1848, 1852, 1856, and 1860, although in the 1856 and 1860 platforms, forced by the demands of a maturing nation, the Democrats inconsistently supported the development of military and post roads and federal aid for a railroad to the Pacific.

C. Legislation and Sectionalism: All major federal legislation for natural resources before 1860 in one way or another dealt with the resources of the

18. I am aware that this presentation highly over-simplifies the situation and that in a longer treatment many qualifications would have to be made. For example, the Seaboard South after 1820 was generally opposed to cheap lands but made peace with parties and sections depending on how they stood on the tariff—for the Seaboard South a far more crucial question.

19. 1 A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789-1902, 490 (Richardson ed. 1903).

20. April 4, 1808, American State Papers, 724-921 (1832).

public domain. Of the 23 most important acts, 3 were concerned primarily with minerals, 3 with timber, 3 with internal improvements, and 9 with disposal policies of the public lands. Three laws dealt with exploration and survey policies. One law, the Preemption Act of 1841,²¹ was a compromise which dealt with internal improvements, pre-emption, and the tariff. Finally, one piece of legislation established the Department of the Interior in 1849.²²

Unfortunately not all of these acts were passed with recorded votes. An analysis of the legislation on which the yeas and nays are available is, however, significant. It clearly shows that the development of the nation's natural resources was associated with sectional interests. Furthermore, because of the sectional alignment of parties, the legislation presented clear party issues during the decades of 1810, 1820, and 1830. Raynor G. Wellington in his discerning volume, *The Political and Sectional Influences of the Public Lands, 1828-1842*, sums up well the interests of different sections on the various issues about 1830. He finds that, in order of importance, the northwest favored

low-priced public lands, internal improvements, a high tariff; the Southwest—low-priced public lands, a low tariff, internal improvements; the Seaboard South—a low tariff, no internal improvements at federal expense, high-priced public lands; the North Atlantic States—a high tariff, high priced public lands, internal improvements.²³

On the basis of this priority of interests, the northwest and southwest were able successfully to combine forces on legislation involving the resources of the public domain and to withstand the pressures of the New England and seaboard south states until the 1850's when the issue of slavery broke up the alliance. The seaboard south was more often split on proposals which directly affected the interests of the west and New England and frequently made peace with either the Democratic or Whig forces on questions relating to the public domain depending on what the immediate proposals of those parties were on other issues, particularly the tariff.

As the controversy leading up to the Civil War deepened, the sectional alignments began to shift. The north Atlantic states, under the influence of an economic philosophy which foresaw the west as a great potential market and under political pressures from the Free Soilers and Abolitionists, retreated from their position that the public domain should be a large source of revenue and united with the northwest on promoting internal improvements and a high tariff. The southwest in turn broke away from the northwest and cemented its ties with the southern seaboard, a shift that was reflected in the debates over the homestead legislation of the late 1850's. In terms of internal improvements and the

21. 5 Stat. 453 (1841).

22. Act of March 3, 1849 (Interior Department Act), 9 Stat. 395.

23. Wellington, *The Political and Sectional Influences of the Public Land, 1828-1842*, 9 (1914).

public domain the sectional shift did not clearly show up on the votes of either the Illinois Central Railroad Grant in 1850²⁴ or the Graduation Act of 1854 (Public Lands),²⁵ but by 1862 the support for the Homestead Act left no doubt that at least on some issues the entire north had found a common cause.

D. *Presidential Administrations and Political Leadership*: The attitudes of presidents and other major political leaders toward natural resources before 1860 are closely associated with the programs of their parties, and party programs, as I have pointed out, were built around objectives other than the wise development of natural resources per se. With but one exception, the presidency of John Quincy Adams, no political administration from Washington to Buchanan revealed any concept of natural resources that showed a distinguishing foresight for the nation's future needs. It is true that not all of the presidents represented what may have been the dominant concept of their party. For example, Madison in his veto of the internal improvement bill of 1817 or Monroe in his message to Congress in 1817 probably did not reflect the majority opinion of their day.²⁶ Nor did Tyler represent the Whig majority in Congress when he refused to support any land distribution schemes which necessitated an increase in tariff duties.²⁷ The views of these presidents, however, were not motivated by any special concerns for the despoliation of the public domain but turned upon other questions, constitutional and economic.

The only political leader before 1860 who possessed a concept of natural resources which rose above party consideration was John Quincy Adams. In fact, one must pay tribute to a man who expressed views that were not appreciated until three-quarters of a century later. He foresaw the need for a wise development of America's natural resources and to that end tried to foster scientific achievements which would serve as the basis for an enlightened approach. His experiments in tree culture were, for example, among the first to be undertaken in this country.²⁸ But America was not at that stage of its development where

24. (Act of September 20, 1820) 9 Stat. 466.

25. 10 Stat. 574 (1854).

26. It should be pointed out that both Madison and Monroe were in sympathy with programs of land and water route improvement, but leaning toward strict construction of the Constitution both thought it should first be amended. Yet pressures could not be withstood, and it was during Monroe's administration that the policy of land grants for wagon roads and canal and river improvements was inaugurated. For a good account of these events see MacGill, *History of Transportation in the United States Before 1860*, 131-41 (1917).

27. See 4 *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents 1789-1902*, 47-48 (Richardson ed. 1907).

28. In 1827 he wrote in his diary: "Last year was my first experiment of planting acorns. . . . Colonel Perkins told me yesterday that he thought our pasture white oak, well salted, as good for ship-building as the best live-oak. This is encouragement for me to persevere in my experiments, which I would leave as at once a charge and an inheritance to my children." 7 *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams* 324 (Charles Francis Adams ed. 1874-1877).

Adams' program would make good political capital.²⁹ He himself admitted, "My own system of administration, which was to make the national domain the inexhaustible fund for progressive and unceasing internal improvement, has failed."³⁰

It would be misleading to imply that other political leaders before 1860 were never concerned about any aspects of natural resources. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Henry Clay, John Calhoun, Jefferson Davis, and others were vitally concerned about such things as soil fertility, crop rotation, fertilizers, and water run-off in their private farming operations.³¹ The documents of the early agricultural improvement societies give many testimonials on this score. Yet this concern for natural resources was never translated, as it was by John Quincy Adams, into a concept of public policy that encompassed the government's obligations to foster wise resource programs.

It is true that during the great debates of the 1830's and 1840's on preemption and distribution, one finds references which counselled a policy of conservatism toward the public domain. The resolution by Senator Foote in 1829, which led to the famous Haynes-Webster debate, began as an inquiry into the expediency of limiting the sale of public lands.³² Clay on more than one occasion was accused of fostering a program which led to governmental paternalism.³³ Attitudes which seemed to imply that a number of political leaders were adopting a more conservative attitude toward the development of the public domain became more marked in the late forties and fifties. The Democrats in particular began to give forth with phrases that implied concern for the future as they rose to answer the proponents of homestead legislation. There was a tendency to extol the land-disposal system as it had operated in the past and, sincerely or not, to predicate the existing system as the best for posterity. As Senator Alpheus Felch, Democrat from Michigan, pointed out:

29. For instance, R. G. Wellington points out that "Adams's policy for the disposition of the public domain, creating a fund from the sale of lands for national internal improvements, was that of a conservative, European administrator, and so did not appeal to a section trying to build up a self-sustaining landholding democracy." *The Political and Sectional Influences of the Public Lands 1828-1842*, 116 (1914).

30. Quoted from Turner, *The Frontier in American History* 26 (1920).

31. The early agricultural societies which were active between 1790 and 1820 contain many references to the farming practices of many political notables. The *Memoirs of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture* are in this respect particularly fruitful source material (6 vols., 1815-1939). Craven's *Soil Exhaustion as a Factor in the Agricultural History of Virginia and Maryland* likewise gives much documentary evidence. *13 Ill. U. Studies in the Social Sciences* 11 (1925).

32. *Cong. Deb.* 3 (1829).

33. The *Louisville Advertiser* rebuked him thus: "He calls upon the fathers of the old states to shackle the energies of their bold, adventurous sons who come to seek their fortunes in the west. He asks them to place an overseer and a land agent at every point upon the public lands, and when the emigrant arrives, worn out by the toils of his journey and destitute of funds, he is forbidden to cut a stick of timber or erect a hut until by magic he shall have coined money to purchase a farm." Quoted in Cameron, *The Development of the Governmental Forest Control in the United States*, 111 (1928).

The reservations of public domain for this purpose have been made in the unbroken forest, and long in advance of the arrival of the settler. Their benefits were designed for the future, and were intended to cease only with civilized society. They are regarded as an earnest of good, and a fund too sacred for desecration. Let no legislation of ours impair this inheritance. Let us carefully scan every proposition which may have that effect, and yield to nothing which will produce such a result.³⁴

Many of these arguments, however, were but a facade for more basic issues. Cheap land or free land meant a threat to the institution of slavery. It affected the speculator's paradise. It reduced revenues for internal developments. It strengthened the power of western states at the expense of the east and the south. These were the real issues for both Democrats and Whigs and motivated their sentiments toward the public domain accordingly.

E. *Conclusion*: Any final appraisal as to which of the major political parties before 1860 represented the best interests of the nation as far as natural resources are concerned is difficult to make. Much depends on the objectives in America's development which are deemed most important. From one point of view the Whigs, inheritors of the Federalist mantle, might be titled as the party of conservation since they were interested in a partially controlled development of America's economy which in turn was reflected in a more conservative attitude toward the development of the public domain. One might conclude that had this attitude prevailed, there would have been far less destructive exploitation of the country's natural resources. Settlement would have been greatly restricted, and it may have been possible to develop administrative machinery to parallel the country's growth.³⁵

On the other side, one can make a strong case for the party program of the Democrats. Their proposals were designed to promote quick settlement and agricultural development of the west. They were also designed to offset the opportunities for large-scale speculation which land grants and internal improvement ventures afforded. Cheap and available land laid the basis for a democratic society and a system of free enterprise. The gross exploitation of natural resources by large industry that marked the close of the nineteenth century had not really begun in the pre-Civil War agrarian economy. It is true that soils were giving out in intensively farmed areas, especially in the plantation regions of the south, but this had begun long before political parties were on the scene.³⁶

34. Cong. Globe, 31st Cong., 2d Sess. Appendix 106 (Jan. 13, 1851).

35. The annual reports of the General Land Office are replete with evidence of inadequate administration. The frontiersman ignored with impunity the laws of the United States concerning the public domain. The annual reports also attest to the ineffectiveness of the GLO as an enforcement agency. The GLO had neither the personnel nor the means to protect the public domain.

36. In 1 *Economic History of Virginia* 430 (1907), Phillip Alexander Bruce traces the decline in soil fertility on Virginia plantations which began to take place even before 1700.

On the other hand, only a small portion of the public domain had been settled. Our mineral resources had scarcely been touched. Over three-quarters of our virgin forests east of the Mississippi were still standing in 1850. It took a technological economy to intensify the rate of consumption to the point where the possibility of exhaustion became alarming.

A justification for the Republican Party's program as it appeared in the last years of the 1850's is difficult to make. It threw overboard the conservative manifestations of both the Whig and Democratic parties and proceeded to embrace a philosophy of unrestricted development. And this was at a time when it was becoming increasingly evident that the opposite course should be followed and programs of prudent resources management instituted. However, it is to the credit of the Republicans that they began to veer away from a sectional approach and to weigh questions on a more pronounced national basis. Under their leadership the Department of Agriculture and the land grant colleges were established. From these institutions were to flow many of the blessings that contributed to a wiser resources policy.

In conclusion, it is probably too much to expect that political parties or political leaders should have exhibited a farsighted approach toward the conservation of natural resources before the Civil War. It would have been out of character with the American society and economy. However, even though intensive exploitation of natural resources may not have begun before 1860, the failure to establish clear-cut national policies for wise utilization made changes of precedent difficult after the Civil War. A controlled program for developing the public domain might have been established when the Constitution was formed, but at that time the major concern was to overthrow the vestiges of feudalism and to eliminate the concept of the "King's Domain."³⁷ Once the barriers were lifted, the pressures released prohibited any change of direction. The political parties flowed with the tide.

III. THE POSITION OF MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES SINCE 1860

During the decades immediately following the Civil War some reorientation of public attitudes toward the use and development of natural resources began to take place. The power-driven sawmill, the steel plow, and the iron foundry had started to change the course of the old society even before 1860. After the war technological advances associated with the philosophy of a rising capitalism marked a new emphasis upon the internal development of the nation.³⁸ More significantly, the country was embarking upon its last great period of westward expansion. Prior to 1862 the public domain had furnished a sense of security for

37. The philosophy of the American concepts of land tenure at the time of the Revolution is usefully treated in Rudolph Freund's article, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson on the Nature of Landholding in America, 24 *Land Economics* 107-14 (1948).

38. For a picture of the impact of technological progress upon American society following the Civil War see Burlingame, *Backgrounds of Power: The Human Story of Mass Production*, ch. X-XIV (1949).

all sections and occupational groups. But with railroad, homestead, and educational grants rapidly diminishing choice lands of the public domain, a feeling of nationwide uneasiness grew as the public began to comprehend the repercussions that would ensue once the nation's rich reserves of natural resources no longer existed. The decades between 1862 and 1891 thus represent the period in which the forces of conservation slowly began to gather political momentum and to press for national legislation which would effectively protect resources of the public domain.

A. *Changing Alignments of Political Parties*: Changing public attitudes toward natural resources were paralleled by the changing structure and realignments of political parties after the Civil War. Three important shifts significant for natural resources policies took place. First, the Democratic and Republican Parties became national parties with a national image and following. This meant that urban as well as rural ideologies and interests had to be represented to varying degrees in party positions. Second, the major parties began consistently to support programs of internal improvements on a nationwide basis. Opening the far west, stimulating business expansion, and providing a network of communications involved more intensive development of the country's natural resources. Finally, changing sectional alignments together with some decline in the political power of sections caused extreme sectional policies on natural resources to be modified.

Beginning with the Democratic and Republican platforms of 1856, and in varying degrees in party platforms thereafter, the shift toward *national* programs of resource development may be noted. The Homestead Act of 1862,³⁹ the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (Agricultural Colleges) of 1862,⁴⁰ the Coal Lands Disposal Act of 1864,⁴¹ and many other pieces of legislation were products of new party philosophies. An alliance was formed between the industrial New England states and the rich agricultural northwest which provided the basis for virtually unrestricted exploitation of the public domain for two decades. Not until parties heard the combined protests of conservationists,⁴² laboring classes of the cities,⁴³ and small agrarians who opposed acquisition of

39. 12 Stat. 392 (1862).

40. 12 Stat. 503 (1862).

41. 13 Stat. 343 (1864).

42. See, for example, John Wesley Powell's far-sighted proposals for changes in the nation's land policies in his Report on the Lands of the Arid Region of the United States (2d ed. 1879). Powell's views were widely circulated. The *North American Review*, *Century Magazine*, *Scribners Magazine*, and other popular journals of the time were the outlet for much of the conservationist writings.

43. In 1872 the Labor Reform Party Convention which was composed of representatives of trades unions and dissatisfied members of the old parties adopted a platform of anti-monopoly tenor which included the plank, "That the public lands of the United States belong to the people, and should not be sold to individuals nor granted to corporations, but should be held as a sacred trust for the benefit of the people, and should be granted to landless settlers only, in amounts not exceeding one hundred and sixty acres of land." McKee, *The National Conventions and Platforms of All Political Parties, 1789 to 1904*, 155 (1904).

choice land and timber reserves by large corporations,⁴⁴ were policies re-examined.

Some indication of the major parties' dominant positions on resources policies are reflected in the regional constituencies of parties. Before the turn of the century the Republican Party more often represented the industrial forces of the east on resources issues, and the east frequently sided with the west on controversies over the appropriation of the public domain. But as conservation sentiment mounted in urban centers, some of the ties between the east and west were broken. This is well illustrated, for example, in the comparison of regional voting in Congress on the Homestead Act of 1862, where the northeast and northwest were solidly together, and the Forest Reserve Act of 1897⁴⁵ which found the Republican Party split between the east and the west. An analysis of voting records in Congress also shows that from 1900 to 1950 the New England region, where the Republican Party has consistently registered greatest strength, has most consistently opposed new programs for resources development.

The Democratic Party, on the other hand, with its constituencies in the south and the large cities and with lesser representations in western states found it difficult for several decades after the Civil War to pull its various interests on natural resources into a common focus. Until about 1890 representatives in Congress from the south voted quite consistently as a bloc against any restrictive policies of resource use. For example, it was opposed to legislation which circumscribed private rights of timber exploitation, as illustrated by its voting position on the Timber Trespass Act of 1880,⁴⁶ and it voted the most heavily of any region against the establishment of the nation's first national park in 1872.⁴⁷ But after 1890 the south tended more frequently to align itself with the conservation sentiments of the east represented by urban forces in the Democratic Party. Between 1910 and 1950 the south has one of the best records of any region, as represented by voting records in Congress, for support of wise programs of resource development.

States west of the 96th meridian have played a distinctive role in both of the major political parties on natural resources matters. Prior to 1900, Democratic and Republican representatives from these states were vigorously anti-conservation. Large areas of the public domain composed the west, and as a region it was resentful of any attempts by the east or the south to enact restrictive legislation for natural resources. After the administration of Theodore Roosevelt, however, and the growth of the conservation movement, the pattern of voting in the west was modified, first clearly reflected in 1911 in the vote in the House

44. For an excellent summary of the farmer's grievances see Hicks, *The Populist Revolt*, ch. III (1931).

45. 30 Stat. 34 (1897).

46. Ch. 227, 21 Stat. 237.

47. Ch. 24, 17 Stat. 32 (1872).

of Representatives on the Weeks Law⁴⁸ which laid the basis of a federal forest program in eastern states.⁴⁹ Since World War I, national party ideologies have played a larger role in the determination of the west's position on natural resources issues, though Congressional representatives of the west have continued to vote quite consistently as a bloc on legislation which directly affected the west's economic future.

B. *Major Party Platforms*: Between 1850 and 1870 the major party platforms emphasized internal development in their planks on natural resources. Beginning with the platforms of 1872, however, as public indignation concerning plundering of the public domain grew, both the Democrats and the Republicans went on record in opposition to any further public land grants to corporations or monopolies. This proved to be the chief issue of natural resources in major party platforms until 1896. The Democrats, however, were more specific in their references to railroads and more vigorous in pledging the return of forfeited lands to the public domain, a pledge which was redeemed in President Cleveland's first administration.

Support for inland waterway improvements crept into the platforms in the 1880's, the Democratic in 1884 and the Republican in 1888. The south particularly was concerned about making rivers and channels navigable, a program to which the Democratic Party gave more emphasis. The Republicans with a large western constituency, on the other hand, tended to place more importance on homestead policies, and the platform of 1892 favored cession of "arid public lands to the states and territories in which they lie, under such restrictions as to disposition, reclamation, and occupancy by settlers as will secure the maximum benefits to the people."⁵⁰ This quotation is significant because in the platforms to follow, the Republicans were from the standpoint of natural resource programs somewhat more solicitous of states' rights than the Democrats.⁵¹

Despite the growth of the conservation movement, the platforms of both parties in 1900 and 1904 featured support of reclamation only. Neither the Republicans nor the Democrats reflected the spirit of the conservation movement in their platforms until 1908, and then, peculiarly enough, it was the Democratic platform which gave greatest support to the policies of Theodore

48. 36 Stat. 961 (1911).

49. John Ise finds it difficult to explain why the western Senators who had been consistently anti-conservation voted for the Weeks bill: He says, "One explanation suggested is that these men thought if they could secure the creation of some reserves in the East, they could make the East sick of the reservation policy, and thus ultimately secure the abolition of the western reserves." Ise, *United States Foreign Policy 220* (1920). I do not agree with this interpretation, since a study of subsequent voting records shows that the Weeks Law marked a turn in the anti-conservation sentiment of the West.

50. McKee, *The National Conventions and Platforms of All Political Parties, 1789 to 1904* (1904).

51. As late as 1929 the Hoover administration proposed cession of the public domain to the states. 71 Cong. Rec. 3572 (1929).

Roosevelt.⁵² This contrast in emphasis was repeated in the platforms of 1912. Undoubtedly strong opposition from the Republican west to many phases of Roosevelt's and Taft's programs made it difficult for that party to give crusading support to conservation in its platforms.

Beginning in 1920, some new phases of natural resources that had not been alluded to previously were dealt with in the major party platforms. Oil had taken on a new significance as a diminishing resource and was highlighted in both the Republican and Democratic platforms of 1920 and 1924, the Democrats being able to capitalize in 1924 on the Teapot Dome scandal of the Harding administration. Waterpower, coal, flood control, and even wildlife were given special billing in the platforms of the 1920's. The Democrats specifically supported the Muscle Shoals nitrogen plant, and in their platform of 1928 we find the first clear recognition of multiple-purpose projects. Paradoxical as this may seem, with but one exception—soil conservation—all of the major conservation programs undertaken by the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration could find support in the major party platforms in 1920, though it would have to be admitted that in the 1930's many of these programs became clothed with new social objectives.

Much of the emphasis on natural resources in the platforms of the Republicans and Democrats from 1932 to 1948 was shifted from conservation of the public domain to programs of conservation of resources in private ownership. The preservation of the country's natural wealth became associated with agriculture and the better life and with national development programs. Unlike previous years, it is possible during this period to discern the social philosophies of the Democratic and Republican Parties from their planks on natural resources. This is especially apparent in the platforms of 1940 and 1948 where the Democrats, for example, strongly support public power, valley authorities and unified regional development. Both parties became more conscious of the special needs of the west in resource development. In addition, the 1948 platforms reflected the concern of national defense; both Republicans and Democrats advocated stockpiling and synthetic fuel developments. The Democrats alone had a statement on atomic energy, favoring its development for peaceful purposes.

An objective review of party platforms of the two major parties since 1860 leads to the conclusion that the Democrats, on the whole, have placed more emphasis on natural resources in their platforms than the Republicans. Not only have the Democrats devoted more statements to the subject, but they have tended to be more specific. The contrasts of the platforms for 1908, 1912, 1924,

52. Theodore Roosevelt had experienced considerable difficulty with Congressional members of his own party on natural resources matters during his second term, and the Democrats took particular delight in pointing out this fact in their 1908 platform when they stated that they favored programs "the enforcement of which Mr. Roosevelt has vainly sought from a reluctant party." McKee, *op. cit.* supra note 50 at 283.

and 1948 are in this respect particularly noteworthy. Only once, in 1932, was the Republican platform significantly more detailed on the subject of natural resources. The Democratic platform for that year was extremely short, and natural resources, insofar as they were alluded to at all, were included under public works programs.

Republican platforms have tended to place more emphasis on private development. They were the first to support the fisheries industry (1888), to favor the establishment of a Bureau of Mines, and to support the mining industry (1908), and to have a separate plank on agriculture and the farmer (1908). Prior to 1930 the Republicans frequently gave more attention to the problems of agriculture. Since that time they have been particularly critical of Democratic programs which implied federal control and development of natural resources.

C. Congressional Voting Records of Major Parties: On the whole the Democrats not only have had better platforms between 1860 and 1950, but they have also had a slightly better Congressional voting record on national resources than the Republicans for this ninety-year period. Furthermore, the Democratic Party compiled a more favorable voting average than the representatives of minor parties.⁵³ The substantiation of these statements is based upon a voting analysis of outstanding natural resource legislation since 1860 on which recorded votes are available. The analysis was conducted for three equal periods of thirty years each: 1861-1890; 1891-1920; 1921-1950. It includes 33 major roll calls, 20 from the House and 13 from the Senate. Eleven of the roll calls fell in the period from 1861 to 1890; 9 came between 1891 and 1920; and 13 were found between 1921 and 1950.⁵⁴ Every administration except the Johnson, Garfield, Arthur, and Harding presidencies, is represented by at least one vote.⁵⁵

The results of the analysis are found in Chart I. It will be observed that for the entire period, 1861-1950, the Democrats show a favorable voting record of 50.2% and an unfavorable voting record of 19.3% as against 47.3% and 26.2% respectively for the Republicans. The over-all Democratic record is strengthened by the strong favorable showing of 70.6% registered during the period from 1931 to 1948, and conversely the Republican score is weakened during the same period by the tally of 34.4%. At the same time, it should be

53. The voting record of the minor parties will be briefly reviewed under the section entitled, "The Role of the Minor Parties." See text, IV, *supra*.

54. A few significant votes have unfortunately not been recorded. In this category I would include the act of 1866 (Mineral Act) 14 Stat. 251, the Desert Land Act of 1877, 19 Stat. 377; Soil Conservation Act of 1935, 49 Stat. 163, and the Synthetic Liquid Fuels Act of 1944, 58 Stat. 190. I do not feel, however, that their omission materially affects the analysis. See discussion in text at note 2 *supra*.

55. Although less than three full terms are represented by these four presidencies (Johnson occupying the office for approximately forty-seven months, Garfield for seven, Arthur for forty-one, and Harding for twenty-nine, the years of the Arthur and Harding administrations are significant by virtue of the philosophies which the administrations represented from the standpoint of natural resources.

CHART I

*Congressional Voting Record of Political Parties on Legislation for
Natural Resources from 1861 to 1950*

The figures are based on outstanding natural resources legislation enacted after 1860 for which voting records were available. They are expressed in terms of percentages of the total vote (including non-voting) for each party for each period.

	1861-1890	1891-1920	1921-1950	1861-1950*
Democrats				
F	34.8%	45.2%	70.6%	50.2%
UF	29.8	14.6	13.6	19.3
NV	35.4	40.2	15.8	30.5
Republicans				
F	58.7	48.7	34.4	47.3
UF	13.8	13.4	51.4	26.2
NV	27.5	37.9	14.2	26.5
Minor Parties				
F	48.6	42.3	51.8	47.6
UF	20.2	26.9	38.9	28.7
NV	31.1	30.8	9.3	23.7

F—Vote favorable to the conservation and development of natural resources.

UF—Vote unfavorable to the conservation and development of natural resources.

NV—Non-voting.

* This column represents an average of the three periods.

noted that the Democrats had a poorer non-voting record than the Republicans, 30.5% absentees as against 26.5%.

A closer examination of voting records of the various periods discloses that the Republicans made the most favorable showing between 1861 and 1890 when they registered a 58.7% favorable and a 13.8% unfavorable vote contrasted with a voting percentage of 34.8% and 29.8% respectively for the Democrats. Of the 11 roll calls upon which these percentages are based, the Republicans had majorities favorable to the public interest in every case, whereas the Democrats had unfavorable majorities in three instances. The reasons for the relative party percentages are not hard to explain. First, the initial rise of conservation sentiment came from the strongly represented Republican regions of New England and the North Central States. Second, the south which composed much of the Democratic opposition did not become conservation minded until near the turn of the century. Nowhere are the voting alignments for the period better illustrated than in the House roll call on the establishment of Yellowstone National Park in which the Republicans voted 96 to 12 for the bill in contrast to the Democrats who were recorded 50 to 18 against the legislation.⁵⁶

The years from 1891 to 1920 which saw some of the nation's bitterest conservation battles find both the Democratic and Republican Parties undergoing considerable readjustments in their voting positions in Congress on natural resources legislation. Though the Republicans continued to hold a slight advantage, 48.7% favorable and 13.4% unfavorable to 45.2% favorable and

56. Cong. Globe, 42d Cong., 2d Sess. 1244 (1872).

14.6% unfavorable for the Democrats, their favorable score declined from the 1861-1890 period in almost the same proportion as the Democrats' favorable score increased. Again explanations for these shifts can be given. Eastern Republicans who had serious misgivings about the use of federal funds began to vote against resources developments in the west.⁵⁷ Furthermore, there were serious conflicts within the Republican Party between those who opposed restrictions upon the exploitation of natural resources by private enterprise and those who supported conservation measures typified by Theodore Roosevelt's struggles with the leaders of Congress during his second term.⁵⁸ The Democrats, on the other side, were picking up conservation strength in the south and in the large urban centers and were losing some of their anti-conservation votes in the far west. Also the Democrats controlled the presidency for three terms during this thirty year interval with administrations that were quite resource-conscious, a factor which tended to produce a more favorable Congressional record.

Several other features are noteworthy about party voting in Congress during the 1891-1920 years. Of the 9 roll calls under analysis, both parties registered majorities on 8 out of 9 occasions. Not one of the roll calls may be characterized as a straight party-line vote. There was a high percentage of non-voting, 40.2% for the Democrats and 37.9% for the Republicans, because conservationists in both parties felt that a number of these pieces of legislation did not go far enough in protecting the public interest. This was particularly true for the Mineral Land Leasing Act of 1920⁵⁹ and Federal Water Power Act,⁶⁰ both of which were enacted in 1920.

The period from 1921 to 1950 takes on a new hue, since much of the legislation for natural resources becomes associated with broad social and economic objectives. With the possible exception of the Synthetic Liquid Fuels Act of 1944,⁶¹ each law under analysis for these years involved broad aspects of the nation's economy and well-being. The Connelly Hot Oil Act of 1935⁶² enacted for the purpose of regulating interstate and foreign commerce in petroleum, the Bituminous Coal Act of 1933⁶³ designed to stabilize the coal-mining industry, and the Agricultural Adjustment Act. of 1938⁶⁴ which, among other things, was passed to control agricultural production, were far more than sim-

57. As an example, out of forty-three Republican votes in the House of Representatives in opposition to the Reclamation Act of 1902, only one came from west of the Mississippi River, whereas thirty came from the nine northeastern states.

58. The strained relations between Theodore Roosevelt and Congress over natural resources policies are well treated in Hays, *Conservation and the Gospel of Efficiency* 122-74 (1959).

59. 41 Stat. 437 (1920).

60. 41 Stat. 1063 (1920).

61. 58 Stat. 190 (1944).

62. 49 Stat. 30 (1935).

63. Guffey-Snyder Coal Act (Bituminous Coal Act), 49 Stat. 991.

64. 52 Stat. 31 (1938).

ple conservation measures. And unlike the decades from 1891 to 1920, legislation for natural resources after 1930 finds clear-cut divisions between Republicans and Democrats on almost every Congressional roll call.

Apart from political philosophies, however, and solely from the standpoint of wise use and development of natural resources, the Democratic Party achieved a far better record than the Republican Party in Congress on 9 major pieces of legislation sponsored between 1921 and 1950. Chart I shows that out of 13 Senate and House roll calls the Democrats recorded 70.6% favorable and 13.6% unfavorable votes, to 34.4% and 51.4% respectively for the Republicans. The Democrats chalked up favorable majorities on each of the 13 roll calls including Senate and House votes on the Boulder Canyon Project Act of 1928⁶⁵ where they registered larger favorable majorities than the Republicans for a bill sponsored by the Coolidge administration. Contrariwise, the Republicans voted a favorable majority on four occasions only. Admittedly, the fact that the Democratic Party was in power when 7 of 9 major pieces of legislation analyzed were enacted had something to do with its favorable voting record in Congress. It is also true that many of the Republicans would have supported some of the conservation objectives embodied in the legislation of this period if other economic and social considerations had not been included.

D. *Presidencies and Conservation*: Any author who attempts to appraise the conservation records of presidential administrations since the Civil War within the space of a few pages leaves himself open to much challenge and criticism. Many other considerations besides party platforms and voting records enter the analysis. If, for example, the evaluation was based solely on significant legislation enacted during each presidency, then since 1865 (and excluding Garfield's six-month term) all but the administrations of Arthur and Harding would merit some favorable attention. Moreover, the records of administrations in power do not necessarily jibe with the records of their parties. As illustrations thereof: The Republican score sheet in Congress particularly during Theodore Roosevelt's second term left much to be desired; Taft's administration was far better than the stand of some of his party leaders reflected, among other places, in the Glavis-Ballinger controversy;⁶⁶ and Franklin D. Roosevelt's natural resources program during his first term went far beyond anything projected in the Democratic Party platform of 1932. The spirit of leadership and the effectiveness of the chief executive in administration are important for capturing the tone of the presidency.

Viewed in this frame of reference, an evaluation of presidencies between 1861 and 1950 shows that the Democratic administrations have attained a better natural resources record than their Republican counterparts. Four of

65. 45 Stat. 1057 (1928).

66. A good summary bibliography of this nation's most publicized conservation dispute may be found in *The Glavis-Ballinger Dispute*, edited by Harold Stein. *Public Administration and Policy Development* 77-87 (Stein ed. 1952).

the five Democratic presidencies—Cleveland (1893-96), Wilson (1913-19), Franklin D. Roosevelt (1932-45), and Harry S. Truman (1945-52)—must be listed as favorable to the conservation and development of natural resources. In contrast, only four out of eleven Republican presidencies (excluding Garfield) may be classified in the favorable camp—Hayes (1877-80), Harrison (1889-92), Theodore Roosevelt (1901-08), and Taft (1909-12)—and at least four would have to be categorized as anti-conservation—Grant (1869-76), Arthur (1881-84), Harding (1921-23), and Coolidge (1923-28). The evidence is either insufficient or inconclusive to make positive identification for four administrations, one Democratic, Johnson (1865-68), and three Republican, Lincoln (1861-65), McKinley (1897-1901), and Herbert Hoover (1929-32).

Without question the administrations which have, to date, been most outstanding in dealing with natural resources are the two Roosevelt presidencies, one Republican and the other Democratic. The Theodore Roosevelt administration is more noteworthy for the drive and support it gave to the conservation movement than it is for the initiation of new policies or legislative enactments.⁶⁷ The protection of the nation's resources was popularized by the work of the Public Lands Commission (1903), the Inland Waterways Commission (1907), the Governor's Conference (1908), and the National Conservation Commission (1908). "T. R." used his executive powers to implement legislation, and he fostered reorganization of the executive branch to more effectively deal with resource problems. A new spirit of law enforcement pervaded the departments, unknown in the McKinley administration. The changes were dramatized to the country at large by the influence of Gifford Pinchot and his role as intimate adviser to the President.

Future historians who possess greater perspective will probably rank Franklin D. Roosevelt's presidency above any preceding administration for its contributions to natural resources. Many of Roosevelt's pioneering programs, of course, were fashioned to meet the economic challenges of the time. Depression, dust bowls, and other catastrophes, such as the Ohio-Mississippi flood of 1936, paved the way for developments which heralded new concerns on the part of the American public. However, some of the advances are directly attributable to Roosevelt's own beliefs since, beginning with his first public office in New York State, as his biographer, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., states, "The central theme in Roosevelt's emerging philosophy was the conservation of natural resources."⁶⁸ In any case, as a result of a combination of circumstances more precedent-shattering legislation was enacted during his first two terms of office

67. Theodore Roosevelt's addresses and statements on conservation mark his entire presidency. Nearly every one of his messages to Congress called for changes in legislation. He looked upon conservation "as the most important contribution of his administration in domestic affairs." Hays, *op. cit.* supra note 58 at 270.

68. *The Crisis of The Old Order* 334 (1957).

than during any other administration. With the exception of the Forest Service, all of the major natural resources bureaus underwent extensive reorganization. The Tennessee Valley Authority, the Soil Conservation Service, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and the Bonneville Power Administration are examples of new agencies which were to have a far-reaching influence on the course of America's development.

Six other administrations, three Republican and three Democratic, must be regarded as having made somewhat lesser contributions to the natural resources movement: the presidencies of Hayes, Cleveland, Harrison, Taft, Wilson, and Truman. The Hayes administration represented the first official reaction since the Civil War against the unwise disposal policies of the public domain. The achievements of the Hayes administration are perhaps less attributable to Hayes himself who, though he expressed public concern about depletion of the nation's resources, did not possess the intensity of conviction and drive exhibited by his German-trained Secretary of the Interior, Carl Schurz.⁶⁹ Under Schurz' leadership the Desert Land Act of 1877,⁷⁰ the Timber and Stone Act of 1878,⁷¹ and the Timber Trespass Act of 1880⁷² were passed. The United States Geological Survey was established in 1879⁷³ although credit for this achievement, insofar as it belongs to a single person, would have to be given to Representative Abram S. Hewitt, a Democrat who skillfully sponsored this legislation in a none-too-receptive Congress.⁷⁴

It was a Democratic administration, namely, Cleveland's, which took the first vigorous steps to curb exploitation of the public domain, actions which laid the basis for the conservation movement. During Cleveland's first term in office the railroads' ownership of vast areas of the public domain was successfully challenged, and nearly one hundred million acres—land granted by the government for which railroad track was not constructed—were forfeited to the government. The General Land Office under Commissioner Andrew J. Sparks was aggressive in its efforts to protect the federal government's resource holdings. The work of the United States Geological Survey was broadened, and under the leadership of Clarence King and John Wesley Powell forward-looking studies of the nation's resources were made. While Cleveland's second term may have been less vigorous in its anti-trust policy, the contribution of this administration to reclamation through the Carey Act of 1894⁷⁵ and the establishment of additional forest reserves should not be overlooked.

69. See Fuess, Carl Schurz, Reformer (1932) and Burgess, The Administration of President Hayes (1916).

70. 19 Stat. 377 (1877).

71. 20 Stat. 89 (1878).

72. Act of June 15, 1880 (Timber Trespass Act), 21 Stat. 237.

73. Act of March 3, 1879, ch. 124, 20 Stat. 394.

74. For the contributions of Hewitt see, Nevin, Abram S. Hewitt 408-09 (1935).

75. Ch. 301 § 4, 28 Stat. 422 (1894).

Both the Harrison and Taft presidencies represented, for the most part, a continuation of policies inaugurated by their immediate predecessors, though admittedly without the crusading zeal exhibited by the Cleveland and Roosevelt administrations. During Benjamin Harrison's term of office a major revision of legislation affecting the public domain was undertaken. Perhaps most significant were the powers which the President acquired to establish national parks within lands set aside as timber reservations.⁷⁶ Harrison's administration, heeding the advice of professional associations, also moved forward with programs designed to protect the nation's forests.⁷⁷

Despite charges to the contrary in the campaign of 1912, Taft's presidency represented no major overturn of conservation policies. True, Taft held a much narrower view of the powers of the presidency vis-a-vis Congress than his predecessor, which caused him no end of political trouble with militant conservationists, particularly Roosevelt's appointed administrators, Gifford Pinchot, Director of the Forest Service, and Frederick H. Newell, Director of the Reclamation Service. Nevertheless, a close examination shows that not only was Roosevelt's administrative organization left substantially unchanged, but during Taft's term of office the executive establishment was strengthened by the creation of the Bureau of Mines.⁷⁸ In addition, significant natural resource legislation was enacted during the years of 1909-1913. The Withdrawal Act of 1910⁷⁹ extended the program of reserving resources on the public domain by including oil, natural gas, coal, phosphates, and water-power sites, resources which heretofore had not been included in statutes. The Weeks Law of 1911 was a piece of far-reaching legislation which established the basis for our present federal-state cooperative forestry program.⁸⁰

The Democratic administrations of Wilson and Truman must be classified also as favorable to the wise use and development of the nation's natural resources. Despite the implications of a statement by Wilson shortly before he assumed office that "A policy of reservation is not a policy of conservation,"⁸¹ his administration continued to protect forest and other reservations of the public domain in the face of heavy pressures from oil and hydro-electric interests to open the locked areas to unrestricted exploitation. However, in 1920, and partly as a result of strong Republican pressures in Congress, the Mineral Lands Leasing Act and Federal Power Act were passed which opened the reserves to limited development by private industry under federal regulation.⁸² In addition, some desirable changes in land policies were effected with the pas-

76. Act of March 3, 1891, ch. 561, § 24, 24 Stat. 1097.

77. S. Exec. Doc. No. 36, 51st Cong., 1st Sess. (1891).

78. Act of May 16, 1910, ch. 369, 36 Stat. 369.

79. Act of June 25, 1910, ch. 421, 36 Stat. 847.

80. Act of Mar. 1, 1911, ch. 186, 36 Stat. 961.

81. N. Y. Times, Jan. 12, 1913, p. 1, col. 7: Address by Woodrow Wilson at Chicago.

82. Ch. 85, 41 Stat. 437 (1920), ch. 285, 41 Stat. 1063 (1920).

sage of the Stock Raising Homestead Act.⁸³ Perhaps Wilson's most notable administrative achievement was the establishment of the National Park Service in 1916 which initiated systematic management of parks and monuments which had already been created.⁸⁴

The impact of war coupled with scientific and technological advances resulted in a number of new programs for natural resources during Harry S. Truman's term of office. With the adoption of the Atomic Energy Act in 1946,⁸⁵ the nation embarked upon one of the most far-reaching undertakings in its entire history, the development of a new form of energy for both peaceful and military purposes. The National Security Resources Board was created with powers to establish policies for the purpose of insuring "adequate reserves of strategic and critical material, and for the conservation of these reserves."⁸⁶ Truman personally waged a vigorous political battle from 1945 to 1952 against turning over the nation's offshore oil resources to the coastal states partly on the grounds that these oil resources were important to our national defense.⁸⁷ On the domestic front, his administration extended programs in a number of fields, particularly in soil conservation and river development in the west.⁸⁸

The administrations of Grant, Arthur, Harding, and Coolidge must be classified as anti-conservation because these were periods in which the public interest became obscured and the nation's future needs neglected. Grant's presidency marked years of unregulated exploitation of natural resources by growing corporations. The railroads particularly were influential in determining policies toward the west and the public domain.⁸⁹ With the exception of the Timber Culture Act,⁹⁰ no positive steps were taken toward a more enlightened natural resources program. Grant's first Secretary of the Interior, Jacob D. Cox, might have provided effective administration, but unfortunately he remained in the post only one year. The program of his successors, Columbus Delano and Zachariah Chandler, left much to be desired.

83. Ch. 9, 39 Stat. 862 (1916).

84. Act of Aug. 25, 1916, 39 Stat. 495.

85. Ch. 724, 60 Stat. 755 (1946).

86. National Security Act of 1947, ch. 353, § 103, 61 Stat. 495.

87. The importance which Truman attached to this issue is reflected by the fact that he devotes a whole chapter of his memoirs to its discussion. 2 Truman Memoirs 479-87 (1956).

88. U.S. Dep't of Interior Ann. Rep. (1949) marked the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Department and gives some picture of the post-World War II accomplishments in the resources field.

89. "By working indirectly, the railroad undertakers found that they could keep the 'greed' of the legislators more easily within bounds . . . that they might exercise a constant surveillance over Congress and its important committees and endeavor to control the strategic standing committees." Josephson, *The Politicos, 1865-1896*, 106 (1938).

90. The Timber Culture Act, ch. 277, 17 Stat. 605 (1873), enacted in good faith, turned out to be a most fraudulently abused piece of legislation. The fact that its provisions were taken advantage of no sooner than the law was passed indicated that some of its supporters saw the "loopholes" in the Act.

The economic philosophy which dominated Grant's administration also dominated Arthur's administration. There were no significant legislative enactments for natural resources during Arthur's presidency despite a growing clamor for changes led by the dissatisfied agrarians of the west. Administrative reforms initiated by the Hayes' presidency were abandoned. A comparison of the annual reports of the Department of the Interior under the secretaryship of Carl Schurz and Henry Teller, Secretary of the Interior during Arthur's presidency, is the best evidence of the changed viewpoint of the two administrations.⁹¹

The Harding and Coolidge administrations must be characterized as anti-conservation, not simply because they were tarnished by the Teapot Dome (Naval Oil Lease) scandals,⁹² but because both presidents failed to recognize the government's role and responsibilities for natural resources development in the rapidly changing economy following World War I. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the political battles over Muscle Shoals which was in many ways the most significant resource issue of the entire 1920's. Believing that government intervention in the economic and social order was wrong,⁹³ both men vigorously opposed federal development of a thirty-five mile stretch of the Tennessee River as a multi-purpose project which would provide for flood control, hydro-electric power, fertilizer, and other benefits for an entire region. To be sure, not all was retrogression during these presidencies, since despite presidential philosophies of government the forces pushing for federal development of natural resources could not be contained. During these years there was increasing federal support for reclamation in the west, featured by the passage of the Boulder Canyon Project Act in 1928. Likewise, the national government fostered various river and harbor improvements and forestry advancements, the latter highlighted by the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924 which provided new arrangements for federal-state cooperation.⁹⁴

E. *Conclusion*: Conclusions concerning which of the major parties was more favorable to the wise use and development of natural resources between 1860 and 1950 are more easily drawn than for the previous period. First, the two major parties have been on the scene since 1860 as national parties and have had identifiable programs. Second, conservation emerged as a national political issue shortly after the Civil War and has been in the political limelight ever since.

91. "Arthur's secretary, Henry M. Teller, was personally honest but had leaned in a deplorable way to the western demand for rapid exploitation of our natural wealth." Nevins, *Grover Cleveland, A Study in Courage* 225 (1933).

92. Ise, *The United States Oil Policy 378-87* (1926), throws a cloud over Coolidge as well as Harding in this affair. Coolidge did try to regain popular confidence by the creation of the Federal Oil Conservation Board in 1924, but no changes in governmental programs resulted from its recommendation.

93. On one occasion, Coolidge was quoted as saying, "If the Federal Government should go out of existence, the common run of people would not detect the difference in the affairs of their daily life for a considerable length of time." Schlesinger, *op. cit.* supra note 68 at 57.

94. Ch. 348, 43 Stat. 653 (1924).

Finally, issues for this period can be viewed within the perspective of a technological economy, something which is not easily done for the nation's formative years.

Summarizing the analysis of the preceding pages leads to the judgment that on the whole the Democratic Party has been a better benefactor of natural resources since 1860 than the Republican Party. Whether appraised on the basis of platforms, Congressional voting records, or presidential administrations, the Democrats have achieved a superior record. The Democratic Party's leadership and accomplishments in this field have been outstanding since the turn of the century. In part this is attributable to vigorous presidencies. When the ninety-year period is viewed as a whole, the Democrats have shown more concern for the nation's future resource needs and more willingness to use the powers of the federal government to foster appropriate developments.

But in any nation with a strong two-party system, the evidence cannot be overwhelmingly on one side, particularly when the parties alternate in capturing political control of the government. Beginning with Lincoln's presidency, the Republicans must be commended for fostering policies which opened the nation's natural resources to economic development by private enterprise. Though there were periods of excessive exploitation by vested interests, nevertheless, the United States would not have experienced the rate of economic growth which it attained during the last ninety years if natural resources had been locked up in government preserves. Credit also belongs to the Republican Party for elevating natural resources problems from the level of sectional controversies to the level of national issues.

Finally, it should be noted that the Republicans were in political power much longer than the Democrats (53 out of 90 years) and are, therefore, more vulnerable to criticism for things that were done or were not done. For the entire period the Republicans registered nearly as good a Congressional voting record for the legislation analyzed as the Democrats, but they did not have, from the standpoint of natural resources, the succession of outstanding presidencies which the Democratic Party can claim.

IV. THE ROLE OF MINOR PARTIES

Until World War I minor parties led the two major parties in advocating programs for natural resources. By and large the advanced position of third parties did not grow out of any particular foresight, but out of what party membership considered to be economic disadvantages and social injustices. This statement is less true, for example, of "single-purpose" parties such as the National Prohibition Party or the short-lived Equal (Women's) Rights Party of the late 1880's. Yet insofar as they took stands on questions of natural resources even these parties were considerably ahead of the major parties of their day.

Before the Civil War, the chief issue for minor parties was free land which eventually became a major rallying point in the formation of the Republican Party. The agitation for free land came from the rising industrial classes of the cities. As early as 1828 the *Mechanics' Free Press*, one of the first labor newspapers, memorialized Congress to discontinue the sale of public domain and to establish a system of disposal by occupancy only.⁹⁵ Since the Democratic Party during this period was primarily the vehicle of agrarian rather than industrial interests, the demand for free land first found expression in the minor party movements.⁹⁶

The first concerted party movement on behalf of free land was that of the National Reformers organized in 1844 under the leadership of George H. Evans.⁹⁷ This group drew its strength from the larger urban centers such as Philadelphia and New York. With the emergence of the slavery issue, the demands for free land were absorbed by the abolitionist movement and became a major plank in the Free Soil Party platforms of 1848 and 1852. The pressures for changes in land laws can be traced in other minority parties, notably the Barnburners, many of whom under the leadership of Van Buren became united with the Free Soilers.⁹⁸ The most effective champion of Free Soiler aspirations during the twenty-year period prior to the passage of the Homestead Act was Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Herald Tribune*, whose editorial columns were widely read.

After the Civil War the emphasis in minority party platforms and programs shifted to attacks on growing monopolies. In the 1870's and 1880's the railroads were the chief target. The huge land, timber, and mineral holdings of the Northern Pacific, the Central Pacific, the Union Pacific, and other railroads spawned increasing discontent, particularly in the west, as the frontier receded. It served as one of the major rallying points for the Granger, Greenback, and Populist movements.⁹⁹

Most noteworthy during the period from 1860 to 1890 was how the concept of conservation grew out of the struggle with monopoly. It gradually became apparent to political leaders of minor parties, which represented discontented

95. Commons, *5 A Documentary History of American Industrial Society* 43-45 (1910).

96. On first consideration the agrarians of the West and the urban laboring classes would seem, as far as free land was concerned, to have much in common. Yet until about 1850 it was politically more expedient for the Democrats to support a policy of pre-emption. Properly administered, pre-emption meant bona fide agricultural settlers, and not a horde of immigrants and indigents rushing westward to become the prey of the speculator and the natural elements and a menace to the stability of agricultural enterprise.

97. Magnusson, *U.S. Dep't of Labor, Disposition of the Public Lands of the United States with Particular Reference to Wage-Earning Labor*, 18 (1919).

98. For additional information on the interrelationships of minority parties on the free land issue, see Donovan, *The Barnburners* (1925).

99. Hicks, *The Third Party Tradition in American Politics*, 20 *Miss. Valley Hist. Rev.* 19 (June 1933).

farmers, miners, and others with economic grievances, that the best attack against huge holdings was to translate the struggle into more lofty concepts, namely, the protection of the nation's heritage. This was an issue around which many diverse elements, urban and rural, could unite. To feature the public domain as a sacred trust was politically far more captivating than a campaign of opposition to further land grants to corporations.

The evolution of the conservation concept can be traced in third party platforms. As early as 1848 the Free Soilers went on record in opposition to land grants to corporations. While this position was obscured with the passage of the Homestead Act and the ascendancy of the Republican Party, by the time of the campaign of 1872 the railroads had acquired such vast territorial possessions that even the Republican Party found it necessary to incorporate a plank in its platform opposing any further "grants of the public lands to corporations and monopolies."¹⁰⁰ In the same year, however, the Labor-Reform Party, the most radical of its day, led with the slogan that was to become increasingly popular, "that the public lands . . . should be held as a sacred trust for the benefit of the people. . . ."¹⁰¹ This refrain was picked up by other minor parties in the 1880's and by the 1890's it was accepted doctrine.¹⁰²

To the Socialist-Labor Party must go the credit for being the first party to clearly formulate the issue of conservation in its platform. The platform for that party in 1892 contained a specific plank demanding "Congressional legislation providing for the scientific management of forest and waterways, and prohibiting the waste of the natural resources of the country."¹⁰³ The statement was repeated in its platform of 1896. Within less than a decade this plank was being implemented by a Republican administration.

Around 1900 the major parties began to assimilate features of minor party programs. By 1908 the Democrats and Republicans had recaptured many of the dissident elements of minor parties as both parties carried forward a more vigor-

100. McKee, *The National Conventions and Platforms of All Political Parties, 1789-1904*, 151 (1904).

101. McKee *op. cit.* supra note 100 at 155. The Labor-Reform Party membership was composed of a large percentage of European immigrants. Coming from countries where many of the resources were under state ownership and control undoubtedly contributed to their more advanced views. The same observation would apply to the Socialist-Labor Party at that time.

102. "The public lands being the natural inheritance of the people . . . we demand . . . that such reclaimed lands and other public domain be henceforth held as a sacred trust. . . ." Greenback Platform, 1884. Porter & Johnson, *National Party Platform 1840-1956*, 69 (1956).

"We believe the earth was made for the people, and not to enable an idle aristocracy to subsist through rents upon the toil of the industrious. . . ." Union Labor Platform, 1888, *id.* at 83.

"The land, including all the natural resource of wealth, is the heritage of the people, and should not be monopolized for speculative purposes. . . ." National People's Platform, 1892, *id.* at 91.

103. McKee, *op. cit.* supra note 100 at 285.

ous program for natural resources. With the exception of the National Prohibition Party, the minor parties which were not amalgamated with the major parties shifted their emphasis to socialist doctrine and on the whole after 1916 were less concerned about specific programs for natural resources.¹⁰⁴ Apparently some of the minor parties were coming to the conclusion that there was little point to spelling out details of regulatory programs under a system of private enterprise when the only solution was to be found in basic changes in the economic system.¹⁰⁵

Neither Robert N. LaFollette's presidential campaign of 1924 nor Henry A. Wallace's Progressive Party added any new dimensions to natural resources policies or programs. Both men were outstanding conservationists and both had made significant contributions to the programs of their respective major parties. However, their political movements were too short-lived to have any demonstrable impact. Undoubtedly LaFollette would have been more militant in carrying forward programs of natural resources than the presidents of the twenties, though his platform of 1924 on that subject was hardly more advanced than the Democratic Party platform of the same year. The Progressive platform of 1948 gave less attention to natural resources than either the Republican or Democratic platforms. It did, however, place more emphasis on a planned economy, and it called for regional authorities in the major river valleys of the country. Natural resources, however, was not a major issue in the Progressive Party campaign of 1948.

On the basis of legislation analyzed, minor parties collectively have a poorer Congressional record on natural resources than the Democratic Party and are but a shade superior to the Republican Party for the period from 1860 to 1950. Chart I shows that the minor parties attained a favorable average of 47.6% contrasted with 50.2% and 47.3% for the Democratic and Republican Parties respectively. The minor parties achieved a better record than the Democrats for the period 1861-1890 and a better record than the Republicans from 1921-1950. However, for the years 1891-1920 they fell slightly below both major parties in the favorable column.

An examination of the voting record on specific legislation reveals that minority party representatives generally supported measures which were designed to curb the privileges of special economic interests or which appeared to benefit the underprivileged groups. They frequently voted in opposition to legislation they regarded as politically expedient compromises or which were deemed to be unsatisfactory solutions for pressing problems. This explains why, despite their

104. The shift toward public ownership is noted as early as 1900. The Social Democratic Party in their platform for that year called for government ownership of all minerals, oil and gas wells, and all water power developments.

105. The Socialist-Labor Party, for example, has not dealt with natural resources *per se* in any platform since 1900. The Socialists have omitted it in most platforms since 1916.

greater militancy, minor parties did not achieve a better Congressional voting record in this analysis.

In conclusion, the most significant contribution of minor parties to the wise use and development of natural resources appears to have been made in the last part of the 19th century. Their political leaders and representatives at that time effectively focussed attention upon the need for protecting the resources of the public domain. They helped to foster the birth of the conservation movement. Minor parties became less effective in the 20th century as they sought solutions for resources problems in terms of socialist doctrine. Their economic panaceas did not suit a nation which was becoming increasingly preoccupied with the scientific, technological, and organizational aspects of resources management in a mixed economy of private and public enterprise.

V. PROSPECTUS

There is always a temptation in reviewing the past to explain events in terms of some all-embracing concept. Natural resources policies, for example, might be historically interpreted from the standpoint of the motivating philosophies of political parties. For the period 1861-1890 Republican Party positions on natural resources could be viewed within the framework of a rising capitalism, the period of 1891-1920 could be seen as a reaction against wanton exploitation by private interests to which both the Democratic and Republican Parties were trying to adjust, and the period of 1921-1950 could be described as an era of governmental intervention represented by the prevailing economic philosophy of the Democratic Party.

Such an interpretation, however, would overlook much that is important. It would not explain regional forces influencing resources developments, forces which presently are having vigorous impact upon both major parties. It would inadequately depict the conflicts of interest between urban and rural populations over conservation objectives that have frequently existed in the past. Nor would such an interpretation give sufficient credit to the role of catastrophe in initiating new undertakings. In short, the relationships of natural resources to America's development have been far too pervasive to be explained in terms of the dominant philosophies of political parties.

But even though it may not be possible to formulate a sweeping theory of the impact of political parties upon natural resources policies, nevertheless, some generalizations can be drawn for the future. On the basis of past history, it is clear that advancements in science and technology coupled with the growing interdependence of the national and international economies will cause problems of resources management and development to become increasingly complex. Rising standards of living together with depletion of raw materials will place greater social premiums upon wise resource use. No political changes may be expected to alter the basic direction of forces and trends.

Natural resources policies will continue to have high priority in the goals and strategy of political parties. Government will inevitably play a larger role in the management and development of natural resources in the national economy. The battleground for political parties, however, will not revolve simply around shibboleths of public versus private enterprise. Instead, political decisions will be complicated by cost-benefit evaluations, resource investment standards, industrial location theory, rates of economic growth, and a host of other social considerations. National defense requirements, the availability of strategic materials, and international commitments will be prominently in the picture. Finally, political decisions will need increasingly to take into account the types of administrative arrangements that can be devised within a federal system to accomplish sought-after goals. Indeed, the party leader may well yearn for earlier days when natural resources problems were not so involved and centered largely around the management of the public domain.

Some group realignments may be expected within both of the major political parties on natural resource matters during the decades ahead. In contrast to much of the past, urban forces should command greater influence in party circles as energy production, stream pollution, metropolitan parks, and other factors become more important for an urban civilization. Labor unions, civic associations, and recreationists are some of the groups which will ascend in power. Conversely, agricultural, forestry, mining, and other resources interests should lose influence.

Despite group realignments, the two major parties may be expected to continue to exhibit a national rather than a regional approach to resources problems. Though party representatives may often vote as non-partisan blocs on issues affecting a region's development, the extreme sectional consciousness of the 19th century will not return. The relative voting strength of the major parties, however, may be affected by resources developments which take place in specific regions. The party which most clearly fashions resources programs to fit a region's needs should capitalize politically. The Democratic Party, for example, has been successful in undermining Republican strength in the far west through more vigorous sponsorship of hydro-electric, irrigation, and other projects. Signs are appearing that the New England region, opponent of extensive federal undertakings in the past, is looking more favorably upon governmental assistance.

Since 1930 the Democratic Party has been more successful in accommodating resources development needs within its prevailing philosophy than has the Republican Party. The Democrats have been more willing to use government to underwrite and operate extensive projects not undertaken by private enterprise. Unless Republicans modify their approach, or provide politically acceptable alternatives to governmental intervention, there are likely to be substantial differences between the two major parties in the resources field for some years to come.

Many factors are present, however, which could modify the present position

of both parties. The continuation of the cold war may force the Republicans to support programs in the interests of national defense which they might otherwise oppose. Conversely, the Democrats may find it financially necessary to scale down their support for domestic undertakings to meet international aid commitments. Substantial shifts in the urban and rural voting population of the two major parties might transform approaches. Likewise, basic changes in group or regional structures of the parties may alter party philosophies. Whatever other variations may result, it seems certain that in the face of the Communist challenge, both of the major parties will be obligated to support whatever resource development projects are necessary to maintain a rate of economic growth which will insure the nation's well-being and survival.

It does not appear likely that minor parties will make any significant contributions to natural resources policies and programs within the foreseeable future. The United States is no longer an agrarian society moored to the land, so that some of the inequities in the use and distribution of natural resources which formerly provided spawning ground for some of the minor parties no longer exist. In recent decades minor parties have failed to come to grips with the emerging technological and organizational issues in this field. The extent to which they will again play an important role such as they did in the late 19th century will depend upon the specific targets which they attack.

Other adjustments in political institutions can be predicted. Over the years, Congress has gradually been losing the initiative to the President in the formulation of resources policies. This trend will continue as more and more of the long-range planning and programming is done by professionally-trained personnel of the Executive Branch. Presidential direction and leadership will figure even more prominently than it has to date in the molding of party objectives. Increasingly, Congress will be playing the role of a reviewing and approving body in the natural resources field.

With the growing interdependence of the economy, pressures should mount for integrated and efficient management of resources programs at federal as well as state levels of government. Consolidation of resources functions may be expected to add to the political power of administrative agencies, particularly as agencies cultivate and receive strong clientele support. Administrators will be exercising more influence in the political decision-making process. Political parties will have to be on guard that party channels are not by-passed in the formulation of important resources policies.

Finally, future resources developments will have great bearing upon the evolution of our federal system of government. One may expect to see a number of new administrative arrangements devised to meet federal and state needs. The degree to which functions and powers are centralized or decentralized will depend upon the types of cooperative federal-state and interstate relationships that can be worked out. Political parties bear the primary responsibility for seeing that a healthy balance of governmental power is maintained.